REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-35 are currently pending. The present amendment amends Claims 23 and 27; and adds Claims 34 and 35. The changes and additions to the claims are supported by the originally filed application. No new matter is added.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 23, 24, 27, and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Sasanuma et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,384,857, hereinafter "Sasanuma"). Claims 24 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Sasanuma patent, and further in view of well known art. Claims 1-22, 25, 26, and 29-33 were allowed. Applicant appreciatively acknowledges the indication of allowable subject matter in the claims.

Addressing to the rejection of Claims 23, 24, 27, and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Sasanuma, that rejection is traversed by the present response.

Claims 23 and 27 are amended to additionally recite "a correction pattern according to characteristics of the image-recording unit can be set independently from a correction pattern according to the image-quality mode." This feature is supported by the originally filed application, for example at page 5, lines 1-17.

Claim 23 is directed to an image-processing device including an image-reading unit that reads image data from a document optically; an image-recording unit that records the image data read by the image-reading unit onto recording paper; a density-correction unit that corrects density characteristics that depend on the image-recording unit; and a control unit that independently controls the density-correction unit to execute density correction based on an image-quality mode applied by an operation unit, wherein a correction pattern according

to characteristics of the image-recording unit can be set independently from a correction pattern according to the image-quality mode.

Claim 27 is directed to a method of processing an image by use of an image-processing device that includes an image-reading unit, an image-recording unit and a density correction unit, the method comprising the steps of: reading image data from a document optically by use of the image-reading unit; recording the image data on recording paper by use of the image-recording unit; correcting density characteristics that depend on the image-recording unit by use of the density correction unit; and controlling said density-correction unit independently, wherein a correction pattern according to characteristics of the image-recording unit can be set independently from a correction pattern according to the image-quality mode.

Turning to the applied prior art, Sasanuma is directed to an image forming apparatus for forming a visible image on a recording medium including image forming means, determining means, and control means. Sasanuma is also directed to a method of controlling an image forming apparatus for forming a visible image on a predetermined recording medium including determining a size of an image area and forming a character image at a first degree of resolution and a halftone image at a second degree of resolution. However, Applicant notes that Sasanuma only determines density corrections according to an image quality mode. This is illustrated, for example, in Fig. 6 which shows a flowchart allowing the selection of three modes (the character, high-precision, and character/photo modes) and explained, for example, at col. 7, lines 12-54. The density corrections may be independent from one mode to another, but they always depend on an image quality mode. For example, Sasanuma states that gradation reproducing characteristics are "independently adjustable in accordance with gradation converting characteristics (i.e., a γ-lookup table) for each of the modes so that the density of the reproduced image becomes equal to the density of the

original document in either of the high-resolution mode and the conventional gradation image reproducing mode."[1] Accordingly, Sasanuma does not disclose or suggest a density-correction unit that corrects density characteristics "wherein a correction pattern according to characteristics of the image-recording unit can be set independently from a correction pattern according to the image-quality mode," as recited in independent Claims 23 and 27.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Sasanuma does not teach all the limitations of amended independent Claims 23 and 27 and that Claims 23 and 27 are not anticipated by Sasanuma. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejection of Claims 23, 24, 27, and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be withdrawn.

In response to the rejection of Claims 24 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Applicant respectfully submits that the Office Action fails to provide a reference teaching the afore-mentioned feature of amended independent Claims 23 and 27. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claims 24 and 28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

In order to vary the scope of protection recited in the claims, Applicant has added Claims 34 and 35, which recite that "the correction pattern of the density correction unit is registerable" and depend from Claims 23 and 27, respectively. This feature is supported by the originally filed application, for example at page 77, lines 15-17, and in Fig. 27C.

[1] See the Sasanuma patent, at col. 5, lines 51-57.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussion, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome. The application as amended herewith is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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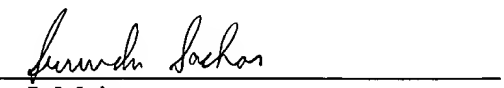

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